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HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION DISCUSSES MEASURES AGAINST TOTALITARIAN IDEOLOGIES AND PRACTICES

Concludes Debate on Right to Self-Determination

GENEVA, 23 February (UN Information Service) -- The Commission on Human Rights today discussed measures to be taken against all totalitarian or other ideologies and practices, including Nazi, fascist and neo-fascist activities based on racial or ethnic exclusiveness or intolerance, hatred, terror, systematic denial of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

The Deputy Director of the United Nations Centre for Human Rights made an introductory statement.

Statements were also made by the representatives of the United States, the Netherlands, the Ukraine, Canada, the German Democratic Republic, Spain, the Soviet Union, Libya, Byelorussia and France.

In addition, the representatives of the World Jewish Congress and International Council of Jurists participated in the debate.

Also today, the Commission concluded debate on the right to self-determination, hearing statements in exercise of the right of reply by China, Portugal, Cyprus, Democratic Kampuchea, Canada, Afghanistan, Mozambique, Viet Nam, Zimbabwe and Morocco.

Statements Made

KWADO NYAMEKYE, Deputy Director of the United Nations Centre for Human Rights, introducing the debate on totalitarian or other ideologies and practices, said that under the preamble to the Charter, the peoples of the United Nations had proclaimed their determination to "practise tolerance and live together in peace with one another as good neighbours". The Declaration and the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination emphasized that any doctrine of superiority based on racial differentiation was scientifically false, morally condemnable, socially unjust and dangerous, and that there was no justification for racial discrimination, in theory or in practice anywhere.

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RICHARD JAEGER (Federal Republic of Germany) said he was convinced that there was no German today who could forget the crimes committed during the Second World War in the name of the German nation. The Germans had pledged that never again would that happen on German soil.

He recalled that the Germans were the first victims of nazism and he agreed with the representative of the Ukraine that there should never again be a revival of nazism. However, he disagreed that there was a new wave of nazism in the Federal Republic of Germany. He was even less in agreement with the representative of the Ukraine when he had stated that the German authorities had failed to combat Nazi groups. While extremist groups existed in the Federal Republic, they were less than 0.2 per cent of the German population.

The Federal Republic of Germany had renounced the use of force and the Commission should rest assured that no totalitarian ideology stood a chance of survival in his country. During the last elections held on 6 March 1983, the extremist groups had obtained only 0.5 per cent of a total of 90 per cent of the population who participated in the vote. That was proof that the citizens of his country had rejected all forms of extremism.

The democratic Government of the Federal Republic had always relied on persuasion to combat extremist groups and so far it had demonstrated that democracy had been able to defend itself against all extremism, he said. The Federal Government believed the existing legal instruments were sufficient to do away with extremism. The continued existence of democracy depended, in the final analysis, on the strength of democracy itself. Any statement to the contrary could only be based on misinformation or malicious intention.

Rights of Reply

LI LUYE (China), exercising his right of reply, said Viet Nam had ignored United Nations resolutions condemning its invasion of Kampuchea and calling upon it to withdraw its troops. It was surprising that Viet Nam should persist in its manoeuvres to deceive world opinion by its disingenous offer of negotiations and troop withdrawal.

As was well-known, negotiations between China and Viet Nam were deadlocked because of the unreasonable demands the Vietnamese authorities had made on China, he said. China, for its part, remained committed to the process of negotiation and to normalization of relations with Viet Nam. But Viet Nam must first take concrete steps to withdraw its troops from Kampuchea and to stop its hostile attitude to China.

FERNANDO REINO (Portugal), referring to the statement by Indonesia on East Timor, said Portugal sought no confrontation, but remained committed to its resolve to co-operate in efforts to solve the situation in East Timor through negotiations. It took note of Indonesia's observations regarding conditions in the territory. However, the situation there was still very serious.

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